



Town of Warren, Rhode Island

Minutes of the Economic Development Board

The Town of Warren, RI Economic Development Board met at a Regular Meeting on May 16, 2011 at 6:00 p.m. at Town Hall, located at 514 Main Street. Board Members present included Sara Volino, Paula Silva, Karen Dionne, Brandt Heckert, Kate Dickson, and Joel Carey. Board members Spencer Morris and Darcy DaCosta were absent; ex officio member Caroline Wells was absent. Board member Priscilla Galligan has officially resigned from the EDB. Kristin MacDonald was present at the meeting to serve as Secretary to the EDB.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

1. Review and Approval of Minutes from the Regular Meeting on April 18, 2011

The minutes from the regular meeting held on April 18, 2011 were reviewed by the members via email. Mr. Heckert made a motion to accept the minutes, the motion was seconded by Ms. Silva, and all members were in favor.

2. Update on Predatory businesses (Dickson)

Ms. Dickson reported that there is a town ordinance that requires a fee and a special license required to sell second hand goods. Ms. Dickson stated that she will contact Tony DeSisto to schedule a meeting regarding the proper licensing of businesses that deal in the resale of second hand items.

3. Update on Sign Ordinances

The Board discussed the current sign ordinances and the problems of non-compliance. Mr. Heckert stated that the town had discussed hiring an enforcement officer; however, the decision was made to tighten the ordinances rather than allocate funds for an officer specifically dedicated to enforcement. The Board discussed the proliferation of non-compliant signage throughout the town, as well as other signage issues such as "grandfathered" signs and defunct signs. The board agreed that lack of enforcement for non-compliant signage impacts the town in a detrimental way.

4. Discussion and Action regarding non-compliant signage (Heckert)

The Board agreed that the EDB must send a set of strong recommendations to Town Council regarding the issue of non-compliant signage. The Board agreed on presenting a

letter to Town Council at the June meeting, and accompanying the letter with specific examples of both good and non-compliant or defunct signage. Ms. Silva stated that she was concerned about calling out specific businesses by name; Mr. Heckert stated that the letter would not call out businesses by name. A motion was made by Ms. Dionne for Mr. Heckert and Ms. Dionne to compose a letter to present to Town Council at the June meeting regarding sign ordinances, Ms. Silva seconded the motion, and all members were in favor.

5. Discussion on Historic District yard sale (Dionne)

Ms. Dionne introduced the idea of a town wide yard sale. The Board briefly discussed the possibility of coordinating this potential event with an existing town festival or expanding the event to incorporate Discover Warren or the Warren Arts Initiative. The Board agreed that the event would have the potential to bring people to Warren. Ms. Dionne said she will look into organizing this event sometime in the future.

6. Update on Warren Arts Initiative (Silva)

Ms. Volino reported that Karen McDonnell is the newest member of the Warren Arts Initiative work group. Ms. Silva announced the group is hosting its first event, an Artist's Happy Hour, on May 25th. The event will be held at The Brass at 16 Cutler Street. She noted that Randy Rosenbaum from RISCA will speak at the event.

7. Discussion of advisory group for Village beautification (Dionne)

Ms. Dionne commented on the recent sidewalk replacement project on School Street. The original bluestone sidewalks were removed and the new concrete sidewalks have no cuts made for the placement of the trees. A discussion followed about how the EDB could be have some input in public works projects in the town's business districts. Mr. Heckert said he would inquire with Caroline Wells as to the possibility of posting the DPW schedule on the town website.

A motion was made to adjourn, the motion was seconded, and all members were in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristin M. MacDonald

*Minutes submitted by Kristin MacDonald
June 17, 2011*

